Module Descriptor

Title	Recognising & Responding to Deterioration		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	Published
Code	NURS10041	**SCQF Level**	10
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Health and Life Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Nicola Rea		

Summary of Module

Managing deteriorating patients is crucial for improving outcomes and preventing avoidable harm across community, primary, and secondary care settings (Health Improvement Scotland, 2023).

This module aims to deepen students' understanding of the importance of recognition, and escalation when caring for patients presenting with clinical deterioration across the continuum of care. Designed for both adult and mental health nursing students, the module offers a comprehensive exploration of the complexities involved in deteriorating patient care. Students will critically examine the assessment and management of patients presenting with deteriorating mental and/or physical health in community, primary, and secondary care environments, thus enhancing their ability to recognise signs of vulnerability and patterns of deterioration; developing contemporary knowledge and skills to effectively respond to, and improve, patient safety and care.

A key component of the module is the person-centred approach to shared decision-making and collaboration, ensuring that patient preferences and needs are prioritised in care delivery. Students will reflect on the broader aspects of caring for deteriorating patients, including professional, legal, and ethical considerations, and their impact on care provision.

By the end of the module, students will possess the knowledge and skills required to provide enhanced nursing care for individuals with complex needs, demonstrating professionalism and a commitment to improving patient outcomes, while also aligning to the graduate attributes of UWS; universal, work-ready and successful.

Key Topics Include: Recognition of and responding to deterioration, Early warning scores and assessment tools, care planning & decision making in deterioration, escalation and limitations of care inc. Treatment Escalation Plans/Do Not Attempt Resuscitation decisions/palliation, sepsis, multi-disciplinary team communication, mental health deterioration & assessment needs, alcohol & drug withdrawal, acute and chronic pain management.

Formative opportunities will be provided during this module in a variety of mechanisms which may include: feedback on classroom-based activities from academics and/or peers, feedback on performance of nursing skills and procedures, feedback on assessment plans or short pieces of formative work and feedback from wider university support services (e.g. Academic skills team).

This module contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2023) SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG - 4 and Quality Education, whilst also aligning to the graduate attributes of UWS; universal, work-ready and successful.

United Nations (2023) Sustainable Development: The 17 Goals. Available from: https://sdgs.un.org/goals

Module Delivery Method	**On-Campus**[1] ☐	**Hybrid**[2] ☒	**Online**[3] ☐	**Work -Based Learning**[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☒ Ayr ☒ Dumfries	☒ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☒ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate the ability to recognise signs of clinical deterioration, utilising appropriate assessment tools and early warning scores effectively.
L2	Demonstrate knowledge and decision-making skills in managing patients with complex health needs.
L3	Critically appraise evidence-based research and the applicability to clinical practice in the context of deteriorating patients.
L4	Explore the professional, legal, and ethical considerations involved in managing deteriorating patients, and reflect on their impact on care provision and patient outcomes.
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 10** Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of how deterioration can present.

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

	Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the assessment skills & tools needed to complete a clinical assessment of the deteriorating patient. Increased knowledge & understanding of decision making. Demonstrating knowledge and understanding that encompasses the principles of care of the deteriorating patient. Increased knowledge and understanding of the contemporary evidence base that underpins care of the deteriorating patient. Increased knowledge and understanding of the professional, legal, and ethical considerations required in managing deterioration and patient outcomes.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 10** Applying knowledge of a wide range of skills and procedures associated with the care of the deteriorating patient. Applied knowledge and understanding of a variety of assessment tools that assist in the safe assessment of the deteriorating patient. Applied knowledge and understanding of national guidelines/intervention bundles in the clinical management of a deteriorating patient.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 10** Critically identifying and analysing complex professional issues in relation to the care of acutely unwell adults. Problem solving and analytical skills in clinical decision making.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 10** Using a variety of both routine and advanced communication skills to support established practices. Demonstrating the importance of communication with patients, families, peers, and senior colleagues to provide effective care of the acutely unwell adult. Numeracy skills related to: Medicines: safe interpretation of physiological measurements, scoring systems, and understanding and interpretation of same. Use of relevant ICT to support care management (e.g Early Warning Scores Apps).
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 10** Displaying autonomy and initiative within professional activities while working under guidance, within a peer relationship and within a multi-disciplinary team. Managing complex ethical and professional issues in line with current Nursing and Midwifery Council standards, while also recognising the limitations of your practice and when to seek guidance. Understanding the legal boundaries/frameworks within which you practice.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	

Co-requisites	Module Code	Module Title

Learning and Teaching

In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.

You will be taught through a combination of lectures, tutorials, workshops and, if part of this module, guided activity in our clinical skills laboratories. This will be supported by materials hosted on our virtual learning environment. Your time on campus is also designed to support your professional development as you work towards becoming a Registered Nurse. Group work, role play, and presentations help you to develop the communication, teamworking and leadership skills needed for professional practice.

Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	10
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	20
Laboratory / Practical Demonstration / Workshop	18
Personal Development Plan	3
Independent Study	149
n/a	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Grant, A., Goodman, B. (2018) Communication and Interpersonal Skills in Nursing 4th edition Exeter, Learning Matters

Health Improvement Scotland (2023) Right Decisions: Care of the Deteriorating Patient; Toolkit. Available at: About this toolkit | Right Decisions (Accessed 17/2/25)

Innes, J., Dover, A., Fairhurst, K., McKay, J. (2023) Macleod's Clinical Examination 15th Edition Edinburgh, Elsevier

Peate, I. (2020) Fundamentals of Assessment and Care Planning for Nurses Oxford, Wiley Blackwell

Peate, I. (2021) Applied Pathophysiology 4th Edition. Oxford, Wiley Blackwell

Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) (2023) Number 167: Care of Deteriorating Patients (SIGN publication no. 167). Available from URL: https://www.sign.ac.uk/media/2091/sign-167-care-of-deteriorating-patients.pdf (last accessed 17.2.25)

Standings, M. (2023) Clinical Judgement and Decision Making in Nursing 5th edition Exeter, Learning Matters.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are attending and participating in all timetabled programme activities including on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, placement, work-based elements, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

The Nursing and Midwifery Council require that students complete 2300 hours of theoretical preparation. Therefore, there is an expectation that all students will attend all scheduled activities associated with the module. This includes on campus and synchronous online activities.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

This module is appropriate for all students. In line with current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights Code, our modules are accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustment for different needs where appropriate. To promote inclusive practice, procedures and processes have been subject to Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate. In line with the Equality Act 2010 and UWS Refreshed Equality Outcomes 2021 - 2025 Public Sector Equality Duty Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Report 2021 (uws.ac.uk) (pp. 37 - 39) the School of Health and Life Sciences encourages the disclosure of support requirements, including disability, at the recruitment stage and throughout the duration of the module. Emphasis is placed on confidentiality of information, the benefits of disclosure, and that no detriment to progress will be experienced. The School will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning approaches and arrangements for assessment, and (when applicable) periods of placement, where appropriate. All learning materials, activities and scenarios will utilise a diverse range of patients to reflect the diversity of students. Professional programmes have Standards of Proficiency which detail the knowledge, skills and understanding required to be met to permit professional registration to be able to practise safely and effectively in the profession. As an education provider for this professional programme, UWS is not able to adjust these standards. However, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist students in meeting these standards. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (2019) have additional information regarding reasonable adjustments which can be found here:

https://www.nmc.org.uk/supporting-information-on-standards-for-student-supervision-and-assessment/student-empowerment/what-to-expect/reasonable-adjustments-if-applicable/

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Adult Nursing Community Health**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

	If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.
School Assessment Board	Pre-registration Adult Nursing
Moderator	Donna Maguire
External Examiner	R Armstrong
Accreditation Details	NMC
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)
Assessment 2
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	100	1

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

Combined total for all components	100%	1 hours

Change Control

What	When	Who